In the claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

76. (Currently Amended) A method for identifying consumers likely to be interested in a particular advertisement, the method comprising utilizing a processing means for:

retrieving consumer transaction records for a first set of consumers, wherein the consumer transaction records for a consumer are generated at least in part from a plurality of purchases for the consumer;

retrieving demographic information for a second set of consumers, wherein the demographic information describes at least one demographic of the second set of consumers, and wherein there is an overlap between the first set of consumers and the second set of consumers such that at least a subset of the second set of consumers and at least a subset of the first set of consumers are the same;

applying heuristic rules to at least a subset of the consumer transaction records for a third set of consumers to generate discretionary elements for the third set of consumers, wherein the third set of consumers includes at least a subset of the first set of consumers and the heuristic rules include establishment of relationships between the consumer transaction records and the discretionary elements, and wherein the discretionary elements include target market characteristics which need not be representative of an actual existing market or single purchasing segment; and

deriving a fourth set of consumers likely to be interested in a particular advertisement, wherein the fourth set of consumers includes consumers within the third set of consumers that have at least one discretionary element in combination with consumers within the second set of consumers that have at least one demographic.

77. (Previously Added) The method of claim 76, wherein the plurality of purchases include point-of-sale purchases.

78.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 76, wherein the consumer transaction records include consumer television interaction transactions.

79.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 76, wherein the consumer transaction records includes consumer Internet interaction transactions.

80.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 76, wherein the demographic information is associated with particular geographic regions.

81.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 76, wherein said retrieving demographic information includes retrieving demographic information from some combination of public and private databases.

82.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 76, wherein the demographic information includes at least some subset of age, income, family size, gender and ethnicity.

83.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 76, wherein the demographic information is probabilistic.

84.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 76, further comprising applying a market segmentation operator to at least a subset of the fourth set of consumers to generate one or more market segments, wherein the market segmentation operator segments the at least a subset of the fourth set into a plurality of groups and each group may represent a market segment.

85.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 76, further comprising applying an advertisement specific operator to at least a subset of the fourth set of consumers to generate a

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target list of consumers, wherein the advertisement specific operator includes a specific discretionary element of interest to an advertiser and application of the advertisement specific operator produces a target list of consumers having the specific discretionary element of interest to the advertiser.

86. (Currently Amended) A method for identifying consumers likely to be interested in a particular advertisement, the method comprising utilizing a processing means for:

accessing a plurality of consumer transaction records for a fist set of consumers, wherein the consumer transaction records for a consumer are generated at least in part from a plurality of purchases for the consumer;

accessing demographic information for a second set of consumers, wherein the demographic information describes at least one demographic attribute of the second set of consumers, and wherein there is an overlap between the first set of consumers and the second set of consumers such that at least a subset of the second set of consumers and at least a subset of the first set of consumers are the same; and

applying an operator to at least some subset of the overlap to create a third subset of consumers likely to be interested in the particular advertisement, wherein the operator includes a discretionary element of interest to an advertiser and the discretionary element is not representative of a single purchasing segment, and wherein application of the advertisement specific operator produces a target list of consumers having the specific discretionary element of interest to the advertiser, the discretionary element not directly identifiable from consumer transaction records.

87. (Previously Added) The method of claim 86, wherein said accessing a plurality of consumer transactions includes accessing at least one consumer transaction database that contains purchase transactions for at least the first set of consumers.

88.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 86, wherein said accessing demographic information includes accessing at least one demographic database that contains demographic information for at least the second set of consumers.

89.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 88, wherein the at least one demographic database includes some combination of public and private databases.

90.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 86, wherein the demographic information includes probabilistic demographic attributes.

91.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 86, wherein the demographic information includes demographic attributes associated with geographic locations.

92.   (Currently Amended) A method for determining consumers fitting within a discretionary element defined by an advertiser, the method comprising utilizing a processing means for:

selecting a set of consumers from a plurality of consumers, wherein the set of consumers may be individuals or groups;

retrieving a discretionary element for an advertisement, wherein the discretionary element includes a selection of target market characteristics not typically associated with item being advertised; and

performing a linear operation on a consumer database having demographic and transaction information, wherein the linear operation is performed for the set of consumers to determine applicability of the advertisement to the set of consumers.

93.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein the target market characteristics include a set of demographic and product preference considerations not representative of any particular group of present consumers of the item.

94.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein the target market characteristics include a number of uncorrelated demographic groups.

95.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein the target market characteristics are not representative of actual consumers of the item.

96.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein the target market characteristics are not representative of an actual existing market.

97.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein the target market characteristics are not representative of a single purchasing segment.

98.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein said performing a linear operation includes correlating the discretionary element and the demographic and transaction information contained in the consumer database for the set of consumers.

99.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein said performing a linear operation includes identifying consumers within the consumer database having specific selection criteria including at least some subset of probabilistic elements such as age, income, or previous purchase profiles.

100.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein the set of consumers are identified anonymously.

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101. (Previously Added) The method of claim 100, wherein the set of consumers are identified anonymously through the use of anonymous transaction profiling.

102. (Previously Added) The method of claim 101, wherein the anonymous transactions include at least some subset of video transactions, purchase transactions, and surfing transactions.

103. (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein an individual consumer is identified by at least some subset of social security #, address, credit card #, courtesy card #, or phone #.

104. (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein a group of consumers can be selected by at least some subset of zip code, area code, central office code, domain name, or employer.

105. (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein a group of consumers can be identified by at least some subset of geographic, demographic or socio-economic factors.

106. (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, wherein the consumer database is a distributed database.

107. (Previously Added) The method of claim 92, further comprising linking at least a portion of a consumer transaction database and at least a portion of a demographic database to form a consumer database.

108.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 107, further comprising generating at least a portion of the consumer transaction database by capturing at least consumer purchase transactions.

109.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 108, further comprising generating at least a portion of the consumer transaction database by applying heuristic rules to at least a portion of the consumer purchase transactions to generate discretionary elements for the consumers, wherein the heuristic rules relate consumer purchase transactions to discretionary elements and the discretionary elements include target market characteristics which need not be representative of an actual existing market or single purchasing segment.

B' cont'd

110.   (Currently Amended) A method for generating targeting information for a set of consumers, the method comprising utilizing a processing means for:

monitoring consumer purchase transactions for a plurality of consumers;

generating consumer transaction attributes for at least a first subset of consumers based on the consumer purchase transactions;

retrieving heuristic rules associated with some subset of the consumer purchase transactions and the consumer transaction attributes, wherein the heuristic rules associate the consumer purchase transactions and the consumer transaction attributes to non-transaction related consumer attributes;

applying the heuristic rules to at least a second subset of consumers to generate non-transaction related consumer attributes for the at least a second subset of consumers;

retrieving demographic information for at least a third subset of consumers;

creating a consumer database containing at least some subset of the consumer purchase transactions, the consumer transaction attributes, the non-transaction related consumer attributes, and the demographic information;

selecting a fourth subset of consumers, wherein the fourth set of consumers are selected from at least some subset of the consumer database; and

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performing a linear operation on the consumer database for the fourth subset of consumers to generate targeting information for the fourth subset of consumers.

111.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 110, wherein said performing a linear operation includes querying the consumer database in a controlled manner to prevent inappropriate measurements from being made.

112.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 111, wherein the inappropriate measurements include privacy violating information.

113.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 110, wherein said performing a linear operation includes grouping or clustering the fourth set of consumers based on similarities to identify the targeting information.

114.   (Previously Added) The method of claim 110, wherein the fourth subset is selected based on at least some subset of particular purchases, geographic factors, demographic factors or socio-economic factors.

115.   (Previously Added) A computer based system for analyzing consumer data for a plurality of consumers in order to determine groups of consumers having certain discretionary elements, the system comprising:

a secure profiling server to gather data about consumers from multiple sources, wherein the data includes at least some subset of consumer transaction records, demographic information, and non-transaction related attributes that are generated by applying heuristic rules to the consumer transactions, wherein the heuristic rules associate the consumer transaction records and to non-transaction related attributes; and

a secure correlation server to perform a set of linear operations on at least a subset of the data gathered by said secure profiling server for at least a subset of the consumers, wherein the

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linear operations are generated to either gather targeting information or to determine the applicability of an advertisement, wherein the linear operators will compare the at least a subset of the consumers to each other in order to determine similarities that may equate to the targeting information, wherein the linear operations will compare the at least a subset of the consumers to an advertisement profile to determine if the advertisement is applicable to the at least a subset of the consumers, and wherein the advertisement profile includes a selection of target market characteristics not typically associated with item being advertised.

116.   (Previously Added) The system of claim 115, wherein the target market characteristics include at least some subset of a set of demographic and product preference considerations not representative of any particular group of present consumers of the item, and a number of uncorrelated demographic groups.

117.   (Previously Added) The system of claim 115, wherein the target market characteristics are not representative of at least some subset of actual consumers of the item, an actual existing market, and a single purchasing segment.

·118.   (Previously Added) The system of claim 115, wherein the at least a subset of the consumers are selected based on at least some subset of anonymous transactions, anonymous transaction profiles, individual consumers identified by at least some subset of social security number, address, credit card number courtesy card number, and phone number, and groups of consumers selected by at least some subset of zip code, area code, central office code, domain name, employer, geography, demographics, and socio-economics.

119.   (Previously Added) The system of claim 115, wherein said secure profile server includes

a source code segment for retrieving demographic information; and

a source code segment for retrieving consumer transaction records.

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120. (Previously Added) The system of claim 115, wherein said secure correlation server includes a source code segment for receiving the advertisement profiles.

121. (Previously Added) The system of claim 115, wherein said secure correlation server includes a source code segment for receiving a description of the at least a subset of the consumers.